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E.MA Students attending EU roundtables at EXPO, Milan

On Thursday, 15 October 2015, 84 students of our Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (E.MA) had the unique opportunity to attend two important events organized by EU Institutions at the EXPO premises in Milan, Italy.

The first event was a conference promoted by the European Commission on the theme “Strengthening global food and nutrition security through research and innovation”: students could hear the recommendations of experts (Directorate-General Research and Innovation of the EU Commission, CGIAR Consortium, German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Fondazione Cariplo, COPA, Irish Marine Institute) on how to improve the transfer from research into practice for global food and nutrition security. Speeches were interesting and sometimes even enlightening and our students had the chance to introduce themselves and nourish the discussions with their constructive questions.



In the afternoon the schedule foresaw the debate on “Human rights, right to food and land rights: What’s missing?” organized by the European Parliament Committee on Development at the EU pavilion, of which students had a guided tour. The debate was moderated by Linda McAVAN, Chair of the Committee on Development of the European Parliament and was held among H.E. Xanana GUSMÃO, first President of Timor Leste and Sakharov Prize laureate and three members of the current European Parliament: Doru-Claudian FRUNZULICĂ (S&D), Anna ZABORSKA (EPP) and Heidi HAUTALA (the Greens). Further hosts of the panel were representatives of FAO, OXFAM, Leiden University, East London University and DEVCO. Once again, students had the chance to interact with such renewed speakers during the official roundtable as well as to approach them personally during breaks, in order to discuss further human rights related issues, share their views or comment on the knowledge acquired during E.MA.

At last some time was devoted also to a quick look at the incredible EXPO revenue: students could spot the pavilions of their own home countries, visit some of them, have a walk in the futuristic EXPO area and, yes, even taste some wonderful food!

All in all the experience was extremely rewarding and we are all very thankful to the European Commission for making it possible and adding even more value to the already invaluable E.MA Programme.